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ABSTRACT

The authors discuss methodology and results of a study to determine the effects of curriculum materials about responsibility on junior high students. Materials are from the Law in a Free Society project developed by the California Bar Association. Four schools in Portland, Maine participated in the study. Three hundred students were pre- and posttested. Two achievement tests and one attitudinal test were administered before the introduction of responsibility materials to the experimental group. After one week of teaching the unit on responsibility, the tests were again administered to the same students. A three-way (grades x ability groups x programs) multivariate analysis of variance of gain scores was performed to test various hypotheses. Only the differences between programs were found to be significant; those differences could be attributed to a slight but significant increase in the scores of the experimental group students on the attitudinal test. It could be that the one week of teaching was not enough to make a clearly significant positive or negative impact on students. Appendices include copies of the achievement and attitudinal tests, and tables showing pre- and posttest scoring data from the test instruments. (Author/AV)

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APR 29

AN EVALUATION OF THE CALIFORNIA BAR ASSOCIATION'S LAW IN A FREE SOCIETY MATERIALS ON RESPONSIBILITY*

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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Introduction

The California Bar Association's 'Law in a Free Society' materials were used in the Portland, Maine, secondary schools for the following reasons:

First, these deal with important concepts for citizenship training and are relatively inexpensive. Second, the materials allow for considerable flexibility in teaching; these can be taught as distinct units or woven into existing social studies curricula. Third, the process of introducing these materials into the various classrooms was likely to provide:

i) a natural forum for teacher and administrator interchange on methods and content.

ii) an opportunity to work closely with teachers on test construction and evaluation of results.

The unit on 'responsibility' (one of the eight available) was selected on a pilot basis, with the assistance of teachers. It was thought that if the experiment were to be successful, the remaining seven units could also be introduced gradually, into the social studies curriculum.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to examine if the introduction of the materials on 'responsibility' will:

a. lead to significant gains in student achievement on the basis of tests which measure their understanding of the various aspects of responsibility

b. generate in students more positive attitudes toward responsibility as measured by a test.

Sample

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Lists of social studies teachers of grades 7, 8 and 9 in the four junior high schools were prepared. Five teachers were selected at random to serve as control group teachers. The students of the aforementioned teachers served as the population for the control group. The remaining teachers served as the experimental group ones; their students served as the population for the experimental group.

All students were divided into three ability groups (High, Average and Low) on the basis of their scores on the School and College Ability Tests (SCAT) Series II, administered in the Spring of 1975. Those students whose scores correspond to the 67th percentile or higher were classified into the high ability group; the students with scores corresponding to the 33rd percentile or lower formed the lower ability group. The rest of the students were included in the average ability group.

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Lists of students were then made for each of the eighteen sub-groups. A random sample of 25 students from each of the sub-groups was then chosen. Table I shows the distribution of students (who were present in all the testing sessions) by grades, programs and ability groups.

TABLE I
DISTRIBUTION OF STUDENTS
BY GRADES, PROGRAMS AND ABILITY GROUPS

	EXPERIMENTAL			CONTROL			
Grade	High	Average	Low	High	Average	Low	Total
7	17	14	17	20	18	15	101
8	16	19	9	18	13	11	86
9	34	29	24	16	5	5	113
Total	67	2	50	54	36	31	300

It can be seen in Table I that the number of grade 9 students in the experimental group is relatively larger than that in the control group; some grade 9 students, who were actually enrolled in the classes of an experimental group teacher, were mistakenly classified as control group students. It should, however, be pointed out that the aforementioned error did not affect the results in any way because it was found while scoring the pre-test. Before analyzing the data, we included those students in the experimental group as they should have been from the very beginning.

Test Instruments Used

Three tests* were used in this investigation; the attitudinal test was provided by the publishers of the 'Law in a Free Society' materials. The essay and the objective tests were constructed locally under the supervision of the principal author.

Attitudinal Test: The authors independently noted if agreement with a given test item on the test indicated a positive or negative attitude. We disagreed with respect to the attitude being measured by nine items on the test and therefore, decided not to score those. Some questions on the test have been worded positively and other negatively; therefore, a computer program was written so that a score of 4 on an item always reflected the most positive attitude toward the statement and a score of one indicated the most negative attitude. If a student chose 5 with respect to any statement, a score of zero was assigned to hir. Thus the scores on the test, with the remaining 23 items, could range from 0 to 92; the higher the score, the more positive the attitude.

Essay Test: Four experienced substitute teachers were hired to score the test. Before scoring, the criteria were devised and outlined by the test graders and the principal author; trial grading of a small number of tests was done by each of the teachers; as all teachers graded the same tests, each recorded his observations on a separate sheet of paper. After grading those tests, the discrepancies found in grading were resolved through discussion. All the tests were graded after everyone had a clear idea of the criteria agreed upon. Letter grades A through E were assigned which were later converted to numerical scores. The scores on the test ranged from 3 to 15.

Objective Test: A team of seven teachers, an assistant superintendent and the senior author met on seven afternoons to prepare a Table of Specifications for the test and to generate a pool of appropriate test items. The best items from the pool were then

* available on request from the authors: 331 Veranda Street, Portland, Maine 04103

selected, edited and assembled to form the objective test used in this study. To score the test, one point was given for each correct response; the scores on it ranged from o to 33.

Appendix A shows the test characteristics of the three instruments used. It can be seen from Appendix A that the reliability co-efficients (odd-even, KR-20 and test-retest) of the objective test range from .60 to .85 and in some cases are almost as high as the ones for most of the standardized achievement tests. The reliability co-efficients (test-retest) of the essay and the attitudinal tests, although lower than that of the Objective Test, are still higher (with the exception of the one for grade 8 essay test) than those of the typical classroom tests.

Procedure

Appendix B shows the schedule of various activities (testing, teaching etc.).

Hypotheses

It was hypothesized that the following were equal to zero:

1. The grade effects
2. The ability level effects
3. The program effects
4. The grade x ability interaction effects
5. The grade x program interaction effects
6. The ability x program interaction effects
7. The grade x ability x program interaction effects

Analysis and Results:

Of the 450 students selected at random, only 300 were present in all the testing sessions; multivariate analysis of their gain scores was carried out to test the aforementioned hypotheses.

The results of the hypothesis tests are summarized in Table II.

TABLE II
RESULTS OF HYPOTHESIS TESTS

Hypothesis	Degrees of Freedom	U Statistics	Significance
1. Grades	3,2,282	0.989922	Not significant
2. Ability Levels	3,2,282	0.986086	" "
3. Programs	3,1,282	0.958374	Significant at .05 level
4. Grades x Ability Levels	3,4,282	0.957373	Not significant
5. Grades x Programs	3,2,282	0.979551	" "
6. Programs x Grades	3,2,282	0.974060	" "
7. Grades x Programs x Ability Levels	3,4,282	0.946760	" "

The only hypothesis to be rejected was that the program effects are equal to zero. Bonferroni type confidence intervals were constructed for the purposes of determing which of the three variables were responsible for the rejection of hypothesis 3. The 95% confidence interval for the experimental program effect on attitudes is 0.13 to 2.75. which is the only one that does not span zero.

Since hypothesis 3 was the only one to be rejected, it was decided to re-analyze the data in order to fit the following model:

$$y_{ij} = M + a_i + e_{ij}$$

where M is the overall mean, a_i is the program effect, and e_{ij} is an error term.

The hypothesis test again showed that the program effects are significant, and that the only confidence interval not spanning zero is again the one involving the attitudinal measure. In the aforementioned model, the confidence interval for the attitudinal measure is 0.36 to 2.70. The observed difference of 3.06 (between the gain scores of experimental and control group students) although statistically significant is not of much practical significance when we consider that the total possible score on the attitudinal test was 92.

Conclusion:

At best this finding is indicative of a trend. The results are based on a test of rather low test-retest reliability ([redacted]). The finding is also dependent upon the subjective, although collective judgment of the authors in determining whether agreement with certain items on the attitudinal test indicated a positive or negative attitude toward the statement. It is our feeling that the one week of teaching was not enough to make either a positive or negative impact. Besides, we did not fully prepare our teachers to teach the unit; although the one and only training session was effective, much more was needed.

References

Law in a Free Society, A Casebook on Responsibility
Santa Monica, California, 1972

Law in a Free Society, A Curriculum on Responsibility
Santa Monica, California, 1972

Law in a Free Society, A Guide for Teacher Education on Responsibility
Santa Monica, California, 1972

Law in a Free Society, Lesson Plans on Responsibility
Santa Monica, California, 1972

APPENDIX A
CHARACTERISTICS OF THE TEST INSTRUMENTS USED

Part I

Grade	No. of Students	Test	PRE-TEST Mean	PRE-TEST Standard Deviation	POST-TEST Mean	POST-TEST Standard Deviation
7	101		6.34	1.81	5.79	1.94
8	86	Essay (1)+	6.87	2.28	6.23	2.13
9	113		7.40	2.21	6.96	2.24
7	101		54.90	9.82	54.19	9.03
8	86	Attudinal (23)++	55.33	8.10	55.83	8.61
9	113		57.00	8.51	56.97	8.20
7	101		17.36	4.90	17.85	5.69
8	86	Objective (33)	19.14	4.26	20.29	4.26
9	113		20.65	4.36	21.75	3.85

Part II

Grade	No. of Control Group Students	Test-Retest Reliability* Essay	Attitudinal	Objective
7	53	.54	.66	.85
8	42	.26	.54	.73
9	26	.52	.67	.67

Part III
Objective Test Only

Grade	No. of Students	PRE-TEST Reliability Odd-Even	PRE-TEST Reliability KR-20	POST-TEST Reliability Odd-Even	POST-TEST Reliability KR-20
7	101	.71	.73	.75	.81
8	86	.64	.66	.60	.66
9	113	.66	.68	.64	.61

\+ Number of questions on the test
++ Number of questions scored
* Based upon four week interval

APPENDIX B

The Schedule of Various Activities

Name of Activity	Date(s)
Objective Test Construction	September 16, 23, and 25, 1975 October 7 and 21, 1975
In-Service Training	November 5 and 19, 1975 December 11, 1975
PRE-TEST	
Social Studies Part I (Essay)	February 10, 1976
Attitudinal	February 10, 1976
Social Studies Part II (Objective)	February 11, 1976
Teaching the Unit on 'Responsibility'	February 23 through 27, 1976
POST-TEST	
Social Studies Part I (Essay)	March 9, 1976
Attitudinal	March 9, 1976
Social Studies Part II (Objective)	March 11, 1976

SOCIAL STUDIES TEST: (Essay) PART I

Time: 10 Minutes

Your Name: Grade:

Name of your Social Studies or U. S. History Teacher:

Question:

Discuss as many aspects of responsibility as you can; be sure to include an example of responsible behavior in your answer.

(The quality of your answer will be judged on the basis of your understanding of the role of responsibility in various aspects of our lives.)

SOCIAL STUDIES TEST: (Objective) PART II

Your Name: Time: 35 minutes

Name of your Social Studies Teacher: Grade:

Directions: Circle the letter of the best answer.

1. The responsibility to govern one's behavior according to standards and values such as those commonly found in such philosophies as the Ten Commandments and the Golden Rule is an example of which type of responsibility?

   a. Moral
   b. Legal
   c. Political
   d. Social

2. Which of the following best describes moral responsibility? "While walking through the neighborhood one night, you hear a woman scream for help."

   a. You call the police.
   b. You forget about what you hear since it could be a trap.
   c. You go to see if you can help.
   d. Both a. and c. are correct.

3. Reporting an accident is to legal responsibility as aiding an injured animal is to:

   a. state responsibility
   b. legal responsibility
   c. moral responsibility
   d. political responsibility

4. Which of the following is your political responsibility?

   a. Go to the polls and vote for the people you've heard are good candidates.
   b. Don't vote; most candidates are just trying to make money.
   c. Familiarize yourself with the candidates and issues, and then vote for the best candidates regardless of the political party they are in.
   d. Familiarize yourself with the candidates and issues, and vote along political party lines.

5. Which of the following is (are) a benefit of responsible behavior?

   a. Self-esteem
   b. Security
   c. Freedom
   d. All of the above

6. A decision to settle a conflict of interest should be based on:

   a. a well defined rationale
   b. one's intuitive sense
   c. one's social responsibility
   d. individual responsibility

7. If you believe a law to be unfair, your political responsibility is to:

   a. break the law
   b. work to change the law
   c. see what the Bible says
   d. see what your friends think

8. A lawyer's client tells him that he is indeed guilty. The lawyer's professional responsibility is to:

   a. tell the police
   b. keep the secret
   c. tell the client that he has committed a crime and he (the lawyer) cannot continue the case
   d. none of the above

9. Which of the following is the responsibility of the news media to the public regarding the problem of illegitimacy?

   a. Publish each and every detail concerning an illegitimate birth
   b. Inform the public about the problems of illegitimacy
   c. Publish nothing about illegitimacy since it is a private matter

10. Which one of the following is a benefit to the state, if it provides financial aid to persons over sixty?

   a. Persons over 60 will decrease the financial burden on taxpayers
   b. Persons over 60 will be placed in old age homes
   c. Persons over 60 will live adequately and not cause further burden to society
   d. All of the above are beneficial

11. Read the following newspaper excerpt carefully and then answer the question that follows:
"It was learned today that the welfare board has made a $3,000,000 mistake in favor of welfare recipients. A computer has failed and the welfare recipients have been overpaid for the last three months!!"

Which of the following constituencies is the state <u>most</u> responsible to for this mistake?

   a. The recipients
   b. The taxpayers
   c. The welfare board
   d. Department of Health, Education and Welfare

12. Illegitimate children are primarily the responsibility of:

   a. parents
   b. courts
   c. taxpayers
   d. all of the above
   e. none of the above

13. You're waiting in a parking lot for a friend when you see a man back into another car. The man gets out of the car and looks around and then drives away. Would your moral responsibility be to

   a. chase after the car to get the license number?
   b. tell the parking lot attendant?
   c. write a note and leave it on the empty car's window?
   d. all of the above

Directions: If a statement is true, circle T; if it is false, circle F.

Q. 14. The State Welfare Board has the legal responsibility to check welfare cheating. T F

Q. 15. State aid to parents of illegitimate children helps them to live adequate lives and prevents further burdens to society. T F

Q. 16. One benefit of responsibility is that the behavior may be anticipated. T F

Directions: Determine whether each of the following statements is true or false. If the statement is true, circle the "T" following the statement. If it is false, circle the "F" and write in the blank the word or words, that when substituted for the underlined word or words will make the statement true.

Examples:

The earth spins on its axis once each month — T (F) day
The sun always rises in the east. — (T) F _____

Q. 17. If a person is injured as a result of your poor driving, helping him out is your political responsibility. T F _____

Q. 18. Reporting to work on time is to moral responsibility as stopping at the scene of an accident is to legal responsibility. T F _____

Q. 19. Registering for the draft was to legal responsibility as preventing shoplifting is to political responsibility. T F _____

Q. 20. Column A consists of examples of various types of responsibility; the types of responsibility have been listed in Column B. In the blank beside each example in Column A, write the letter of the type of responsibility which it most accurately depicts. Items in Column B may be used once, more than once, or not at all.

Column A examples	Column B Types
___ A Congressman's obligations to voice the views of persons who live in his district	a. Legal
___ Collecting income taxes	b. Political
___ Giving money to charity	c. State
___ Helping someone who is hurt	d. None of the above
___ Obeying traffic laws	
___ Paying taxes	
___ Providing housing for the poor	
___ Registering your car	
___ Reporting a theft	
___ Voting during an election	

SOCIAL STUDIES TEST - PART III

Directions:

Read the material below carefully and then answer the questions that follow:

When Larry Westley was seven he began to show signs of an illness. Larry's parents immediately took their son to several doctors. The doctors told Mr. and Mrs. Westley that the illness, diabetes, was serious, but that it could be kept under control by using a medicine called insulin.

The Westley family joined the Church of Spiritual Fellowship, and as the years went by became deeply committed to its religious teachings. Lead by Pastor Nash, the church believed in divine healing. As a result of the teachings, Mr. and Mrs. Westley took Larry to a woman from the Church of Spiritual Fellowship congregation who claimed she had cured herself and others by faith. After Larry's visit with the faith healer, his parents threw out his supply of insulin. "Both Larry and Pastor Nash felt he was healed," Mr. Westley told a friend. "We completely believe in the power of faith healing."

Two days later Larry began to have periods of unconsciousness. His parents and friends and the faith healer prayed beside his bed. When he continued to slip deeper into unconsciousness, Mr. Westley called Pastor Nash, who came to the house immediately to pray for Larry. Mrs. Westley asked her husband if they should go to the drug store to buy some insulin, but they decided against it.

The next morning, Mrs. Marks, a neighbor who had known the Westleys for many years, and had known of their plan to take Larry to a faith healer, advised Mr. and Mrs. Westley to call a doctor. "I'm a nurse, and I know that Larry's condition will continue to get worse," she told his parents. "He'll die if he doesn't get proper medical attention." Mrs. Marks left the house wondering if she should call the police.

Larry Westley died later that evening while his parents prayed beside his bed.

Circle the letter of the best answer:

Q. 21. The death of Larry Westley was probably due to a conflict between

a. legal and political responsibility
b. social and political responsibility
c. moral and legal responsibility
d. moral and political responsibility

Q. 22. Who of the following was (were) responsible for Larry Westley's death?

a. Larry himself
b. Larry and his parents
c. Larry, the faith healer and his parents
d. Larry's parents and the faith healer

Q. 23. The actions of Mr. and Mrs. Westley can be explained by

a. legal responsibility
b. social responsibility
c. political responsibility
d. legal and social responsibility
e. none of the above

Q. 24. Regarding responsibility to others, Mrs. Marks' action is to moral responsibility as the Westleys' action is to

a. legal responsibility
b. moral responsibility
c. political responsibility
d. legal and moral responsibility

IF YOU FINISH BEFORE TIME IS CALLED, CHECK YOUR WORK ON THIS TEST. THANK YOU.

The Attitudinal Test*

Directions

Please print your name, grade and the name of your Social Studies or U.S. History teacher; then go to the directions that follow:

Your Name: _____ Grade: _____

Name of your Social Studies or U.S. History Teacher: _____

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the statements on this questionnaire by circling the number of your choice as follows:
Circle

1) If you strongly agree
2) If you agree
3) If you disagree
4) If you strongly disagree
5) If you are not sure or don't have an opinion on the statement

Example

All students should go to college. 1 2 3 4 5

If you disagree with the statement, you should circle 3 as shown.

There are no right or wrong answers to the statements on this questionnaire; therefore, you should respond to these as honestly as you can. You will have 25 minutes to complete this test.

Question Number	Choice Number
1. Teachers are mostly responsible for the failure of students to learn.	1 2 3 4 5
2. A leader should also be held responsible for the acts of those who work for him.	1 2 3 4 5
3. The more responsibilities people are given the more responsible they become.	1 2 3 4 5
4. Without responsibility there can be no freedom.	1 2 3 4 5
5. People should never do things their conscience tells them not to do.	1 2 3 4 5
6. People should not take on many responsibilities because responsibility limits their freedom to do as they please.	1 2 3 4 5
7. The best way to teach children to act responsibly is to allow them to participate in all important decisions.	1 2 3 4 5

GO TO NEXT PAGE

*Nine questions which were not scored in the study by Singh and others (1976) have not been included in this test.

8.	In certain ways, every German was responsible for Hitler's acts.	1	2	3	4	5
9.	Responsible people waste time making sure they're doing things right.	1	2	3	4	5
10.	Soldiers should be punished for their immoral acts even if they were only following orders.	1	2	3	4	5
11.	The best way to encourage responsibility in children is by planning their activities.	1	2	3	4	5
12.	A parent should pay for any damage accidently done by his or her child.	1	2	3	4	5
13.	We should stop blaming society for everything and hold people responsible for their own acts.	1	2	3	4	5
14.	Responsible people are more efficient than others.	1	2	3	4	5
15.	Persons engaged in business should be held responsible for any damage caused by their companies.	1	2	3	4	5
16.	People are losing their sense of responsibility because we try to understand lawbreakers instead of punishing them.	1	2	3	4	5
17.	A soldier should be rewarded for acts of bravery even if he or she was only following orders.	1	2	3	4	5
18.	People should be held responsible for their acts even if they are considered to be mentally ill.	1	2	3	4	5
19.	A person who accidently kills another with a gun should be held responsible for the death of the person even if he or she "didn't know the gun was loaded".	1	2	3	4	5
20.	In any given situation, we know how a responsible person will act.	1	2	3	4	5
21.	Responsible people are more likely than others to feel guilty.	1	2	3	4	5
22.	When children reach the age of eighteen they no longer have any responsibilities to their parents.	1	2	3	4	5
23.	People feel good about themselves when they are given major responsibilities.	1	2	3	4	5

Note: If you finish before time is called check your work on this test. Thank you.